

600 Indiana Ave., NW(Commercial Building)  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-506

HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
320-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS  
DC,  
WASH,  
320-

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This four-story office building is located on trapezoidal Lot 811, on the northeast corner of Square 450. It is adjoined on both south and west by narrower, more traditional three-story commercial structures.

Built in 1928, the building originally had a drive-in gasoline station on the ground level. At present, a storefront has been installed and the space has been adapted to office use.

The structure of the building is concrete, with exterior walls clad in yellow brick on the upper floors; the base is clad in limestone, perhaps part of the changes involved in the conversion to office use. On the facades, the window bays of the upper levels do not align with the structural piers at the base, probably the result of inserting a repetitive, symmetrical fenestration system in a building whose structure had to respond to an odd-shaped lot. The Sixth Street facade has nine equidistant window bays on the upper three floors. The third bay from the south is blind. The base is modulated by 3 1/2 structural bays, the half bay occurring on the southern end and being the entrance to the upper floors. On Indiana Avenue there are 12 window bays and 4 structural bays appearing on the base. Each window opening is embellished with soldier courses at the lintel. Additional facade ornamentation is limited to stone beltcourse at the fourth floor window sill level, the roof level and the coping course. The roof parapet has decorative stone panels with relief escutcheons above every other window.

The entrance to the ground floor offices occurs at the northeast corner, where the glazed storefront is chamfered behind the northeast corner column of the building, which is cylindrical and reminiscent International Style expression. The main entrance of the upper floors on the southern end of the Sixth Street facades leads to a small vestibule with an elevator and stairs that ascend along the south wall. Finishes for the spaces are modern; the layout is one of random stud partition subdivisions.

## ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Building was designed in 1928 by Architect A. S. J. Atkinson (Building Permit #6162, 6/2/28). While not architecturally distinguished, the building has documentary interest because of its now-erradicated gas station on the ground level. This was once common in downtown Washington, and at present few, if any, remain.

As part of the urban scape, the building acts well in conjunction with the Orienta Coffee Building in providing corner anchors for this short stretch of Sixth Street. Its weak architectural expression makes it an amenable background building.